



Southeast Louisiana Refuges Complex

**61389 Hwy 434, Lacombe, La. 70445
985/882-2000**

*Atchafalaya
Bayou Sauvage
Big Branch Marsh
Bogue Chitto
Breton
Delta
Shell Keys*

Spring 2005 Newsletter and Calendar of Events

Slidell Native Returns for Delta/Breton Law Enforcement Slot

From the swift rivers of Alaska to the choppy waters of the Gulf of Mexico - quite a change! Slidell native Sidney Charbonnet is ready, though, to get on board with his new assignment at the Venice, LA office of Southeast LA Refuges. He'll be conducting law enforcement duties in the offshore waters and sand spits of Breton National Wildlife Refuge, and in the intricate channels and marshes of Delta NWR.



A graduate of Slidell's Northshore High (ask him about his sports career), he then attended Delgado, LA Tech, and Southeastern on his way to receiving a degree in Wildlife Biology from Grambling University in 2002. His enrollment in the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Student Career Employment Program then took him to Alaska's Innoko National Wildlife Refuge for two years, along with 15 weeks of specialized training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Georgia.

He is happy to be back in Louisiana, for now, and looking forward to working with and learning from veteran members of our law enforcement staff. You can tell he's still got the wonders of Alaska in the back of his mind, though!

Jammin' with GLE's

No, they're not the latest hip-hop group, though GLE's have kept us hopping lately. Grade level expectations (GLE's) and CLU's (continuing learning units) are new standards which all teachers must meet, and the programs their students participate in must meet these requirements as well.

For the past few months the Environmental Education Department has been revising already-existing educational programs and developing new ones to meet the new requirements now in place in Louisiana. On November 30th, environmental education consultant/volunteer Marilyn Hollis and EE staff member Diane Barth attended a workshop for informal educators who provide professional development to teachers. Titled "Jammin' with GLEs and CLUs", the very informative and relevant workshop was sponsored by several organizations with the chief presenters being members of the Region1 (Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes) School Improvement Team, though the workshop addressed educational standards state wide.

For the purposes of our programs, the GLE requirements are the most relevant, and relate to the specific concepts and skills that kids learn by taking part in our school programs. Teachers can quickly assess the value and relevance of our school programs by looking at the GLE's that they cover. GLEs were created to : (1) meet the requirements of the NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT, which mandates that states develop grade-by grade standards; (2) guide the development of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the four core content areas in Louisiana Schools, and (3) provide uniformity in core content taught across Louisiana.

Core subjects include:

1. English/Language Arts
2. Math
3. Science
4. Social Studies

The information conveyed in the workshop has inspired us to continue to improve the quality and relevancy of our environmental education programs, and we have even had some fun in the process! To learn more about educational programs at Bayou Sauvage and Big Branch Marsh phone (985) 882-2022.

Flying Christmas Trees

That tree you put on the curb in January will soon be flying over Bayou Sauvage, on its way to assist with marsh restoration. Helicopters from the Army National Guard will airlift the trees into position in the Turtle Bayou area of the refuge.

Many other partners are involved in the effort: From the City of New Orleans, the Mayor's Office of Environmental Affairs and Departments of Sanitation, Waste Management, and Parks and Parkways, Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office, LA Dept. of Natural Resources, and LANG.



The trees will be bundled on the last week of March, and dropped into the refuge March 29-31.



Working the Winter Away

We have 6 volunteers living in their RV's at our headquarters site. These three couples work three days a week in exchange for their campsite, and considering that they & other volunteers did much of the work on these campsites, it's been a real boon for the refuges.

For the first time in a long time all our boardwalks are caught up on repairs. We have evaluated all our educational programs for the new standards system, and have those standards available for visiting teachers. The new restrooms at Lemieux Rd. on Big Branch Marsh NWR, were finished by our skilled volunteer force.

Trash patrol is taking up some of their time, always a problem on our refuges. Files and images are getting organized too! We have a few bigger projects that are coming up as well, including fishing piers on Lake Rd!

So if you see Rudy, Marilyn, Bob, Sharon, or Butch & Gerri, remember, they don't have to do all that work, they choose to contribute, and we need it, and appreciate it!

For more information about volunteer opportunities on refuges please contact Doug Hunt at (985) 882-2024.

Do You Remember When?

The “old barn” at Bayou Lacombe Centre was built in the early 1930’s by Judge Wayne G. Borah. He was the first developer of the property and was also responsible for building the main residence (now used as intern housing) along with the pool area. Judge Borah’s wife Elizabeth Pipe Borah was credited with laying out the gardens and planting camellias and boxwoods.

Judge Borah decided to move to New Orleans in 1945 and sold the property “lock, stock and barn” to ex-Gov. Richard Leche. Leche elaborated on the gardens. By 1950, the area became a commercial garden attraction, Bayou Gardens, and the barn became a museum for the gardens.



The Redemptorist Fathers purchased the property in 1956. The barn was used for offices, recreation rooms, and class rooms for Holy Redeemer School.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service bought the 112 acres in 1998. Upon inspection, lots of termite damage was discovered in the barn, plus there were concerns about asbestos and lead paint.

With Service plans to widen the entrance road into the area, and due to the termite damage and safety issues, the decision was made to tear the barn down.

So now when you are entering the area you can say “I remember when there was a old barn there.”

Two January Fires K.O.’d



Two large wildfires occurred on Big Branch Marsh NWR on January 28th. The Left Jab fire was 263 acres and the Right Cross fire was 259 acres, both were set late at night in timber and marsh. Both of these fires were on units with prescribed burn plans and, though in a wildland-urban interface setting, no homes were immediately threatened. The fire-qualified staff did some suppression work that night to keep the nearby homes safe and began full suppression in the morning.

In the ring assisting Refuge staff were some Sandhill Crane NWR staff and a rental helicopter. The fires were “K.O’d” that day and declared out on January 29th. No lasting damage to the resource was sustained in either wildfire.